



NEWS

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For Immediate Release
July 9, 2001

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AIR DISTRICT COLLECTS \$300,000 IN PENALTIES FROM CHEVRON

Settlement Eliminates Ten Tons of Smog-Forming Emissions Per Year

In a civil penalty settlement agreement, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District received \$300,000 in penalties from Chevron refinery in Richmond. The settlement addresses 52 notices of violation issued to Chevron for violating various air quality regulations—one of which is the most stringent regulation of fugitive emissions from refinery valves and connectors in the country.

In addition to the monetary fines, Chevron is also required to surrender ten tons of volatile organic compound emission reduction credits (ERCs) to the Air District for permanent retirement. Emissions credits are generated when facilities reduce the amount of emissions beyond permitted limits. This will result in a net air quality benefit for the people of the San Francisco Bay Area for years to come. The settlement also expands the Air District's oversight and direction of Chevron's air quality compliance management system currently in development.

The Air District is also working with Contra Costa County officials to possibly allocate a portion of the penalty settlement to help fund improvements in their emergency notification system with particular emphasis on area surrounding the Chevron Refinery in Richmond. The county's automated system delivers phone messages to the neighbors in the vicinity of the refinery when there is the potential of harmful emissions impacting the area.

"This settlement with Chevron demonstrates the Air District's on-going commitment to enforce its air quality regulations, and to assess appropriate civil penalties for violations, great and small," said Air District Executive Officer Ellen Garvey. "While air quality has improved in the past 30 years, the Bay Area is in a non-attainment status for the

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health-based federal ozone standard. The Air District's numerous measures to regulate ozone-forming gases from stationary air pollution sources must be enforced to protect the health of Bay Area residents," Garvey added.

The violation notices included in this settlement are as follows:

- Fifteen violation notices involving organic emission leaks from refinery valves and flanges
- Ten violation notices for excess emissions from waste water separators
- Seven violation notices for excessive smoke.
- Seven violation notices for not complying with District permit conditions mandating specific maintenance procedures that are in place to prevent excessive emissions.
- Six violation notices involving Chevron's pollution monitoring systems.
- Three violation notices for leaks from other miscellaneous process equipment
- Two public nuisance violations—one for the refinery fire in March, 1999 and another for a sulfur dioxide release in June, 1999.
- One violation notice for excessive sulfur dioxide emissions.
- One violation notice for failing to meet tank inspection requirements.

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